

L.A. County Workforce Development Board (WDB) Member

BIOGRAPHIES

REPRESENTATIVES OF BUSINESS

CARLOS ADAME

Carlos Adame is the Vice President of Human Resources at AltaMed. He previously served as Regional Vice President of Human Resources with United Healthcare. He is a member of the Society of Human Resources Management. AltaMed is one of the fastest growing health care providers with locations throughout the county. He received an MBA from UC Irvine and a B.A. in Business Administration from CSU Fullerton. Mr. Adame was nominated by the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce as a Business Representative.

RUSSELL BARNARD

Russell Barnard is President of the Hospitality Industry Management Group (HIMG), the operating company for Rusty's Surf Ranch, now in its 22nd year on the Santa Monica Pier, and other industry related activities. Mr. Barnard's previous hospitality industry experience includes concept development and operation of Santa Monica restaurants such as The Tavern on Main, The Atrium Espresso Bar Café, and the Ocean Park Omelet Parlor. Mr. Barnard was an Instructor in the Department of Communications at Stanford and an Assistant Professor of Journalism at CSU Northridge. Mr. Barnard was nominated by Supervisor Kuehl and the Pier Lessees' Association as a Business Representative.

RANDY BOWERS

Randy C. Bowers is the President and CEO of Malaga Bank, which has been serving the residents of the South Bay for over 30 years. He currently serves on the Board of Trustees and as Chairman of the Finance Committee for Marymount California University. He is the past Chairman of both the Palos Verdes Peninsula and San Pedro Chambers of Commerce, and he still sits on the Board of the San Pedro Chamber. Mr. Bowers was nominated by Supervisor Knabe and the San Pedro Chamber of Commerce as a Business Representative.

CYNTHIA KURTZ

Cynthia Kurtz is the President and CEO of the San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership (SGVEP). As President and CEO, Ms. Kurtz assists a 29 member Board of Directors and a 6 member Executive Committee in representing the positions of San Gabriel Valley businesses on major policy issues facing the San Gabriel Valley and the State of California. Ms. Kurtz has nearly 40 years of public service experience including service as the City Manager of Pasadena and Interim City Manager of Covina. She received a M.A. in Transportation and Urban Housing from the University of Iowa and a B.S. in Community Development and Housing from Pennsylvania State University. Ms. Kurtz was nominated by the SGVEP as a Business Representative.

CINDE M. MACGUGAN-CASSIDY

Cinde M. MacGugan-Cassidy is the President of Catalina Business Services, Inc., a provider of accounting services, human resources management, structural establishment, business planning, administrative solutions, and general organizational development for business clients. Ms. MacGugan-Cassidy has prior experience as a small business and non-profit finance consultant specializing in organizational development, financial management, strategic planning and accounting. She received a B.S. in Business Management. Ms. MacGugan-Cassidy was nominated by Supervisor Knabe and the Catalina Island Chamber of Commerce as a Business Representative.

KIMBERLY MAEVERS

Kim Maevers is the President of the Greater Antelope Valley Economic Alliance (GAVEA). She worked many years in the building industry and gained experience in land development, public policy, construction, economic development, community sustainability, and rural land conservation. Ms. Maevers received a B.S. in Consumer Sciences from Colorado State University. She was nominated by Supervisor Antonovich and GAVEA as a Business Representative.

JOANNE PETERSON

Joanne Peterson is the Executive Officer of Human Resources at L.A. County Metropolitan Transportation Authority. Ms. Peterson has many years of professional experience and has become a respected leader in public sector human resources, a sought-after public speaker and author. Ms. Peterson received an MPA from the University of Washington, an Associate Degree in Occupational Therapy, and Certification in Strategic Leadership from the Dominican University of California. She was nominated by the L.A. Area Chamber of Commerce as a Business Representative.

HOLLY SCHROEDER

Holly Schroeder is the President and CEO of the Santa Clarita Valley Economic Development Corporation (SCVEDC). Ms. Schroeder has over 20 years of management experience and executive experience in private sector, governmental, and non-profit organizations. Ms. Schroeder received an M.S. in Applied Information Management from the University of Oregon, and a B.A. in Chemistry and French from St. Olaf College. She was nominated by Supervisor Antonovich and the SCVEDC as a Business Representative.

ERICK VERDUZCO-VEGA

Erick Verduzco-Vega is the President of the South Bay Latino Chamber of Commerce (SBLCC) which has over 200 small business members located throughout the County. He served as an appointee of the 2nd District and was Vice Chair of the L.A. County Workforce Investment Board. Mr. Verduzco-Vega received a B.S. in Finance, Real Estate and Law from CSU Long Beach. He was nominated by Supervisor Ridley-Thomas and the SBLCC as a Business Representative.

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE WORKFORCE

AIDA BARRAGAN

Aida Barragan is the Executive Director of the Building Skills Partnership, which is a statewide organization that works to improve the quality of life for property service workers by increasing their skills, access to education, and opportunities for career and community advancement. Prior to her current role, she served as Staff Director with the Service Employees International Union – United Service Workers West for more than 10 years. She previously served on both the L.A. County and L.A. City Workforce Investment Boards. She received her B.A. from UCLA and her A.A. from Santa Monica College. Ms. Barragan was nominated by the L.A. County Federation of Labor to serve as a Representative of Labor.

SHOMARI DAVIS

Shomari Davis is a Business Representative with the International Brotherhood of Electric Workers – Local 11. In this capacity he works to expand employment opportunities for L.A. County residents in the building trades and serves as a liaison between labor and management on construction projects. He received an Associate Science Degree in Electrical Technology in 1988 from Pasadena City College. He previously served on the L.A. County Workforce Investment Board. Mr. Davis was nominated by the L.A. County Federation of Labor to serve as a Representative of Labor.

CORINNE SANCHEZ

Corinne Sanchez is the President and CEO of El Proyecto del Barrio, Inc. a non-profit organization that provides comprehensive health, employment, childcare development, HIV outpatient medical and education, youth and rehabilitative services to the underserved communities within L.A. County. Ms. Sanchez has over 37 years of experience in Non-Profit Organization Administration. She received a JD from the San Fernando College of Law and a B.A. from CSU Long Beach. Ms. Sanchez was nominated by Supervisor Solis as a Representative of the Workforce.

LAURIE TRAKTMAN

Laurie Traktman has served as a labor attorney in Los Angeles for over 20 years. She serves on the Board of Directors for the California Conservation Corps Foundation where her work is focused on expanding employment opportunities for California's youth and young adults. Also, Ms. Traktman recently joined the Advisory Board of the Los Angeles Alliance of a New Economy, an organization that addresses the challenges of working poverty, inadequate healthcare and polluted communities. Ms. Traktman received a JD from USC and a BA from Barnard College of Columbia University. She was nominated by Supervisor Solis as a Representative of the Workforce.

JAIME VALDIVIA

Jaime Valdivia is the Executive Director of the Piping Industry Progress and Education (PIPE) Labor-Management Cooperation Committee. He is affiliated with many labor associations including serving as the President of United Association Local Union 398. He is also a member of the Advisory Board for the Mounty Baldy Regional Occupational Center. Mr. Valdivia is also a Certified Instructor of Journeyman Training. He received a B.A. in Labor Education from National Labor College and an Associate Degree in Applied Science/Industrial Training from Washtenaw Community College. He was nominated by the L.A. County Federation of Labor as a Representative of Labor.

REPRESENTATIVES OF GOVERNMENTAL & ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ENTITIES

WAN-CHUN CHANG

Wan-Chun Chang has worked with the California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) for over 38 years and is currently responsible for managing a vocational rehabilitation services program as the District Administrator over the Van Nuys/Foothill District. She has served on the L.A. County Commission on Disabilities and the Advisory Board since 2007. Ms. Chang previously served on the L.A. County Workforce Investment Board. She received her M.A. in Guidance from Eastern Kentucky University and her B.A. in English from Fu Jen Catholic University. She was nominated by DOR as a representative of a Vocational Rehabilitation.

DAVID FLAKS

David Flaks is the Chief Operating Officer of the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC). Mr. Flaks previously held positions of LAEDC Senior Vice President of Strategic Initiatives, Communications Director for a Democratic Nominee in a U.S. Congressional race, and President of David Flaks Capital, a communications and financial consulting firm. He received a Master's Degree in Political Management from George Washington University, a JD from American University, and a B.S. in Philosophy from the University of Wisconsin. He previously served as an Economic Development Representative on both the L.A. County and L.A. City Workforce Investment Boards. He was nominated by LAEDC as a Representative of Business and Economic Development.

THOMAS FLOURNOY

Thomas Flournoy is the Division Chief for the Employment Development Department (EDD), Los Angeles/Ventura Workforce Services Division. He is an executive member of EDD's senior management team; recommending policy and procedure that affect job services on a state level. Previously, Mr. Flournoy was the Deputy Division Chief of the Southern Workforce Services Inland Empire Region where he was instrumental in setting the benchmark for exemplary Integrated Service Delivery (ISD) in the Riverside County American Job Centers of California (AJCC). Mr. Flournoy is a United States Armed Forces Veteran and earned a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from CSU San Bernardino. He was nominated by EDD as a representative of Wagner-Peyser.

REPRESENTATIVES OF ENTITIES ADMINISTERING EDUCATION & TRAINING

CYNTHIA PARULAN-COLFER

Cynthia Parulan-Colfer is the Superintendent of the Hacienda-La Puente Unified School District, the 2nd largest adult education system in the state (after LAUSD). She has over 25 years of educational leadership experience in Vocational Education, English-as-a-Second Language, Citizenship, Greater Avenues for Independence, Adults with Disabilities, and Parent Education. She received a J.D. from Boalt Hall School of Law, UC Berkeley, an M.A. in Educational Administration from CSU Fullerton, and a B.A. from UCLA. She was nominated by the Department of Community and Senior Services as a Representative of Adult Education.

DR. PATRICIA RAMOS

Dr. Patricia Ramos is the Dean of Workforce and Economic Development at Santa Monica College. She is also the owner and operator of Los Angeles' premier espresso catering business; America's Cup Espresso Bars, located in Santa Monica. Dr. Ramos served as the Youth Council Chair of the L.A. County Workforce Investment Board. She was nominated by Supervisor Kuehl as a Representative of Higher Education.

WDB STAFF

RICHARD VERCHES, WDB EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Richard Verches, has served as the L.A. County WIB (now WDB) Executive Director since 2009, and has extensive professional experience in international human rights and refugee law, university administration and teaching, corporate communications, public affairs and government relations, non-profit organizations and philanthropy. Since 2003, he has taught courses on "Human Rights in the Americas" in the Department of Chicana/o Studies at UCLA. He has also taught at Santa Clara University School of Law's international human rights law summer program in Strasbourg, France. In 2002, he co-founded an immigrant education and financial literacy community organization. He was a Partner in DataTrends, a national research, strategic communications firm; President of the Latin Business Association; and Director of Community and Media Relations, and Crisis Communications and Senior Consultant for International Affairs with ARCO..

His community service and civic leadership include coordinating the L.A. program of the German Marshall Fund of the U.S. transatlantic leadership program since 1998 and serving on the Board of Directors of the Dashew International Center at UCLA, Advisory Council of the Center of Global Law and Policy of Santa Clara University School of Law, UCLA Foundation Board of Governors, and the UCLA School of Public Affairs' Board of Advisors. He was appointed by Governor Gray Davis to the State of California's Quality Education Commission and High School Exit Examination Independent Consultant Selection Panel. He served on the Board of Directors of the UCLA Alumni Association, Cerritos College Foundation.

KEVIN ANDERSON, WDB DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Kevin Anderson has worked and volunteered during the past decade for a variety of nonprofit organizations, local government agencies and the federal legislative branch. He served as a legislative aide to Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky, where he assisted constituents and advised the congresswoman on issues pertaining to nutrition and agriculture. He was a Senior Public Policy Associate at World Food Program USA, where he built advocacy coalitions and advanced federal policy proposals to alleviate global hunger. He volunteered as an Advisor to the USC Center for Innovation and Research on Veterans and coordinated several special projects at the LA County Department of Public Social Services. He received his MSW and MPA from USC, where he also served as Vice President of the Graduate Student Government. He received his BA from Northwestern University.

JEREMY HARRIS

Jeremy Harris has worked for the L.A. County WIB (now WDB) for over 5 years. He served as a liaison to multiple WIB committees and councils and has been responsible for special and ongoing research and data projects. Mr. Harris received a B.S. from UCLA.

EVA DIAZ

Eva Diaz recently joined the WDB staff and brings 11 years of experience with the County of Los Angeles in Human Resources. She was also the ambassador for the March of Dimes, Charitable Campaign, and Blood Drive for the L.A. County Community and Senior Services (CSS) Department. L.A. County has certified Ms. Diaz as bilingual in Spanish and English.

LINDA WILKINSON

Linda Wilkinson has worked with the L.A. County WIB (now WDB) for 2 ½ years through the Older American Community Service Employment Act (Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965) performing a wide-range of administrative support tasks. Her outstanding work earned her the CSS Helping Hand Award in 2013 and the CSS Core Values Award in 2014. Previously, Ms. Wilkinson worked in the Insurance industry for 35 years.

DIANA ARRAS

Diana Arras has worked for the L.A. County WIB (now WDB) for 7 years. She has performed various administrative assignments in support of the Commission and brings significant enthusiasm to the performance of her duties.